

Design Guidelines

Gardnerville Plan for Prosperity



June 2006

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Gardnerville's History

The Town of Gardnerville was founded in 1879 by Lawrence Gilman of Genoa when he moved the Kent House from the Genoa area to a 7-acre tract of land on the East Fork of the Carson River. Gilman had purchased the land from a homesteader, John M. Gardner, in whose honor he named the new town.

In its new location, the Kent House was renamed the Gardnerville Hotel. The hotel is no longer standing, but its site was just west of the present J & T Bar, near the inter-

section of Eddy and Main Streets (US Highway 395).

Gilman added a blacksmith shop and a saloon to his hotel to ensure his town's utility and popularity with the ranchers. As the town prospered, a number of hotels, shops, and saloons sprang up. By 1899, Main Street was lined with two livery stables, a woodworking shop, a boarding house, a tin shop, three general merchandising stores, a hall, four saloons, one meat market, one furniture store, a drug and confectionary store, and two hotels. The Valhalla Society-a Danish organi-

zation whose purpose was to disseminate information to immigrants-was formed in 1885, making Gardnerville an important social center in the valley as well as a commercial center.

Because of its location, Gardnerville came to serve as feed stop for the 24-horse freight teams passing between Carson City and Bodie.

(Dangberg, Grace. Carson Valley: Historic Sketches of Nevada's First Settlement. Carson Valley Historical Society. Carson Valley, Nevada, 1972.)

Introduction

Gardnerville is located in one of the most quickly urbanizing counties in the West. The Town realizes it has the responsibility to plan and develop commercial and mixed-use districts to support higher standards for investment. The community's expectations for more livable neighborhoods have motivated the Town's leadership to press forward with design policies to be included in the Douglas County Master Plan and design guidelines. These guidelines, and the community discussion that guided their preparation, demonstrate this commitment.



*Above:
New investment should contribute to the preservation, enhancement, and creation of livable mixed-use neighborhoods.*

1.1 Purpose of Guidelines

The Gardnerville Town Board views the quality of the built and natural environment as an important priority. Participants in the Plan for Prosperity process stressed raising expectations for reinvesting along US 395. In newly developed areas, the pattern of development is replicating many of the same undesirable patterns and design issues found in the aging auto-oriented commercial districts. These guidelines, and the associated design review process, are intended to support the Town's efforts to improve community design and encourage reinvestment.

The Guidelines communicate the community's qualitative expectations for new commercial and mixed-use development. The Guidelines are a tool used by project sponsors, Town Board, County staff, the County Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners to support policies in the County Master Plan. The document provides:

- A general description of expectations for investment in Gardnerville's Mixed-use Overlay areas;
- Design criteria for site planning;
- Architectural design guidelines;
- Signage design guidelines; and
- The submittal requirements that support design review process.

1.2 Relationship to other Plans and Policies

The Guidelines are part of the Town's and County's planning and development review system that includes the policies in the Douglas County Master Plan; policies and strategies found in the Gardnerville Plan for Prosperity; and standards in the County's development code.

Gardnerville Plan for Prosperity

In 2005, the Town of Gardnerville prepared the Plan for Prosperity. The Plan included land use, circulation and community design policies and a supporting action plan for vacant and underutilized land along US 395. The Plan provides additional flexibil-



*Above and
Right:*

*(1) Sketch of the
corner of
Gilman and
Heritage Park*

*(2) Sketch of
commercial
service frontage
at Stodick
Parkway*

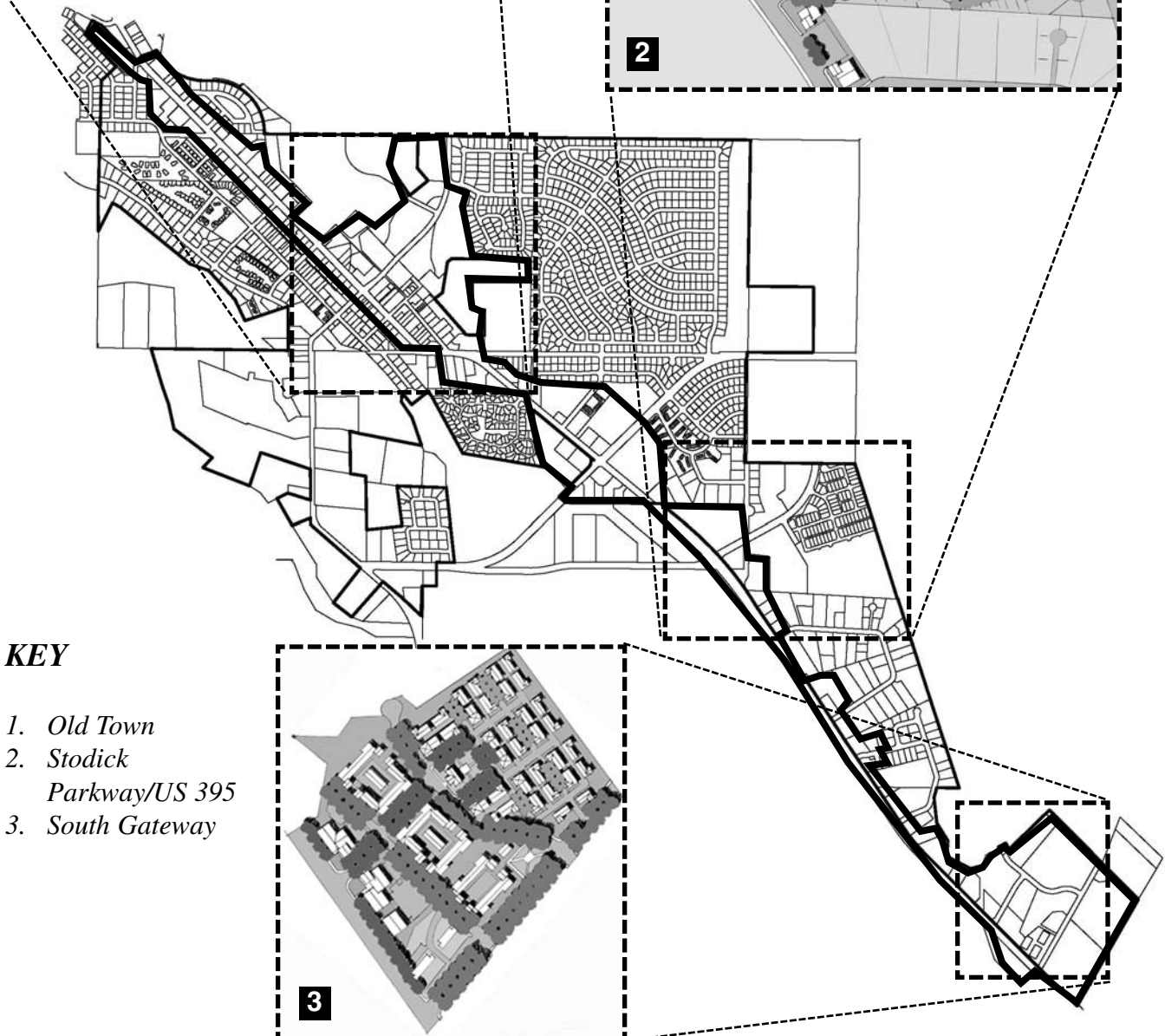
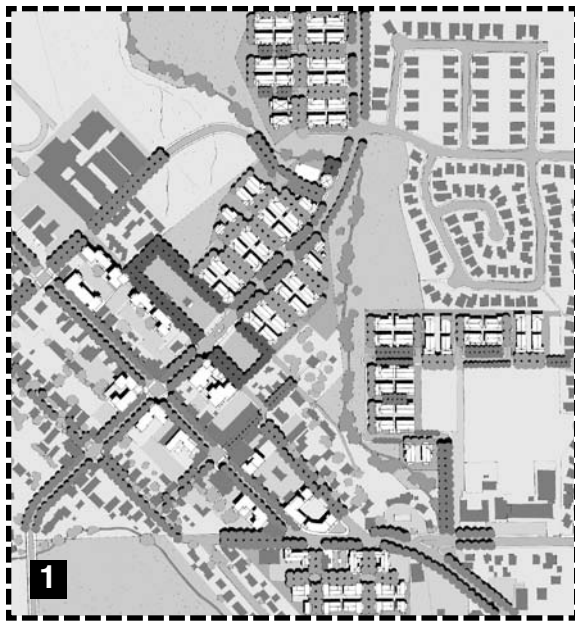


*(3) Sketch of
“South Valley
Plaza”—a
mixed-use
neighborhood
with commercial
frontage and
plaza that
serves as
Gardnerville’s
southern entry*



Introduction

The Gardnerville Plan for Prosperity makes recommendations for existing non-residential areas along US 395. The Plan provides added detail for three important opportunity sites—Old Town, Stodick Parkway/US 395, and the South Gateway.



KEY

1. Old Town
2. Stodick
Parkway/US 395
3. South Gateway

ity for property owners and investors to mix residential and commercial uses. These policies are expressed in a Mixed-use Overlay where new standards are intended to be more flexible and the Guidelines communicate the expected quality for new investment. The goals and policies were integrated into the County Master Plan 10-year update.

Gardnerville Mixed-use Overlay

The Guidelines convey qualitative criteria for new development in the Gardnerville's Mixed-use Overlay. The Mixed-use Overlay is an area identified in the Plan for Prosperity where mixing of residential and commercial uses are encouraged. In this area connections and interface with adjacent residential neighborhoods is critically important meeting then Town's objectives for building a community that is walkable. The Mixed-use Overlay policy is identified in the County's Master Plan.

County Master Plan

The Douglas County Master Plan is the "blueprint" for future public and private investment. It contains urban planning policies for Minden-Gardnerville that establishes regulatory and implementation criteria for the Towns. The Minden-Gardnerville section of the Master Plan has been updated to reflect policies identified in Minden's and Gardnerville's local visioning and strategic planning efforts.

County Development Standards and Guidelines

The County's development standards provide the quantitative criteria for projects. These include allowable uses, height and setback requirements, parking standards and other measurable criteria. The standards are to be updated to reflect new Master Plan policies and

emphasis on pedestrian-friendly development. Gardnerville Mixed-Use Overlay Design Guidelines supercede Douglas County design guidelines.

1.3 Organization of the Guidelines

The Design Guidelines are organized into three sections.

Section One Organization

The first section is the Introduction. It contains a summary of the Guideline's purpose and process, how they are organized, how to use them, how to look at context, and submittal requirements. The section includes overall guidelines for site planning, architecture and signage. The third section provides guidelines that pertain to sub-areas with their own unique character.

Section Two Organization

The second section includes principles, design goals and guidelines. The principles are the most important. Every project should be able to demonstrate that they meet these. The design goals are also important, but may not apply to every project. The guidelines provide greater detail and apply to specific issues and types of projects based on their scope and context. Not all guidelines necessarily apply to each project.

Section Three Organization

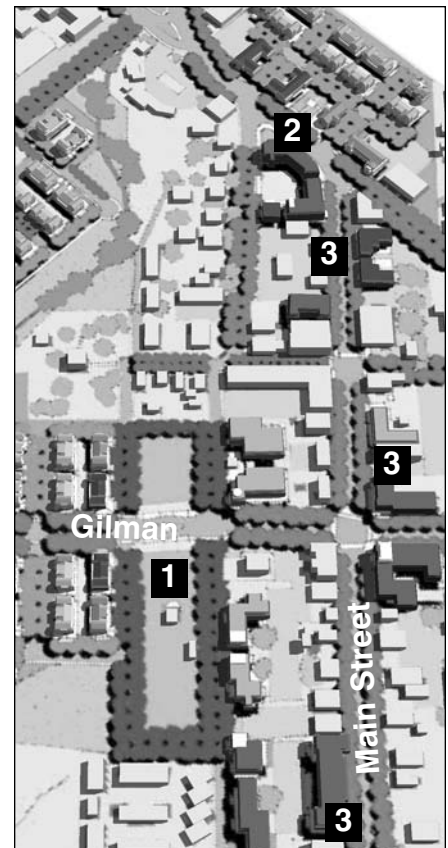
The third section provides primary principles for six "character areas" or sub-areas in the Mixed-use Overlay. These principles come from the Gardnerville Plan for Prosperity Design Policies. Supporting these is a list of important urban design concepts and guidelines that reflect the planning objectives identified by the Town for each character area.

1.4 Using the Guidelines

Below and Right:

This overhead view of Old Town shows new development around Heritage Park (1), redevelopment of the 'S' Curve (2), and infill development along Main Street (3).

The concept locates parking in the interior of blocks and places commercial storefronts along streets. Residential development happens above or behind commercial storefronts.



The Design Guidelines define Gardnerville's and Douglas County's expectations for site planning, architectural design and signage. They do not add steps to the development review process but increase the amount of discussion about HOW projects address the design policies in the County Master Plan. The Guidelines are a tool for project sponsors, the Town and County that frames the design discussion.

Who Reviews the Design of Projects?

The Town Board currently reviews projects in Gardnerville. The Board makes a recommendation to the County Planning Commission and County Commission. The County is required to implement the Master Plan design policies, which are the basis for the Guidelines. Project sponsors can take advantage of the more flexible development standards in the Mixed-use Overlay by demonstrating to the Town how they have applied the Guidelines to their projects.

Do the Guidelines Apply to Your Project?

If your project falls within the Mixed-use Overlay, then they apply except if the project is exempt from development review. Exempt projects include interior renovations, single-family homes not requiring subdivision, and minor renovations.

What Sections Apply?

The Guidelines includes Overall Guidelines (Section One) and Character District Guidelines (Section Two). Overall Guidelines apply to every project in the Mixed-use Overlay. The Character District Guidelines provide criteria for different neighborhoods in the Mixed-use Overlay. For example, if your project is located in Old Town, you would

use sections 2.1 (overall site planning guidelines), 2.2 (overall architectural design guidelines), 2.3 (overall signage guidelines) and 3.1 (guidelines for Old Town).

1.5 Focus on Fitting Projects into Their Context

The Town expects each project to contribute to implementing circulation, architectural and signage objectives for the site and surrounding area. Each project should be planned and designed to fit existing and anticipated investment with a particular focus on the pedestrian experience. Project sponsors need to consider the following questions.

Site connections: How can driveway and sidewalks design increase the connectivity and accessibility between the commercial and residential portions of the project and the district?

Building alignments and orientation: How can building alignments, orientation and transparency contribute to pedestrian connections? What are friendly building and landscape setbacks along public streets? How are building storefronts, residential yards and entries oriented?

Streetscape and landscape design: What type trees exist along public streets? Is there a landscape plan for the neighborhood or district? How can the landscape plan help to knit the project together and link it to the surrounding community?

Roadway and parking lot design: How can parking lots and driveways be designed to increase pedestrian comfort, safety and connectivity? How can trees be used to reduce heat generated by parking lots?

Architectural context: What are the



strongest architectural features in the adjacent neighborhoods and buildings and how can the project complement them?

Signage design: How can an overall signage concept contribute to the graphic identity of the project and the area?

1.6 Submittal Requirements

The development review process already requires basic project information. The Guidelines require additional information about the development site context. The Town's design and development review submittal requirements require the following exhibits:

Context Analysis for Design Review

- Board with photos showing site and adjacent structures
- Map including adjacent neighborhoods, site features (existing buildings, trees, creeks, views, slopes, etc) and adjacent structures
- One page written description of how the project has responded to

its current and future context

Development Program Summary

- Site plan, size and dimensions
- Existing and proposed square feet and unit count
- Existing and proposed parking
- Multifamily private and any common usable open areas

Subdivision Design Information (Subdivision only)

- Subdivision lot layout
- Grading plan/contours and site sections
- Any proposed improvements such as landscaping or fences/walls

Design Information

- Typical building elevations
- Typical floor plans and roof plans
- Site cross sections
- Site landscape plan
- Fence/wall details
- Color and material board
- Typical street sections
- Sketches of public elements (as requested by the Town)



The Design Guidelines are part of the Gardnerville Plan for Prosperity. They were developed through a community process.

Above Top: Planning Opportunities and Options Workshop, April 6, 2005

Above Bottom: Preliminary Concepts, May 25, 2005

Left: Preliminary Framework Plan Review, October 20, 2005

